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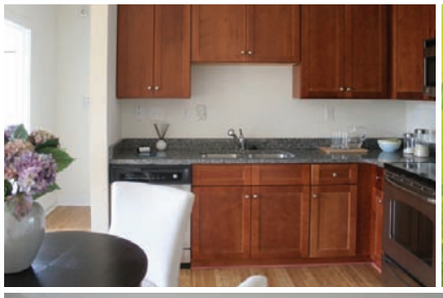

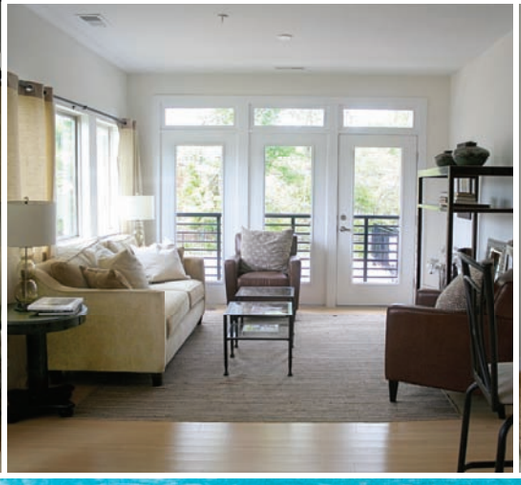

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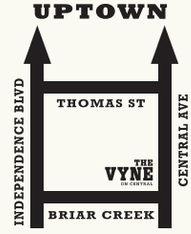

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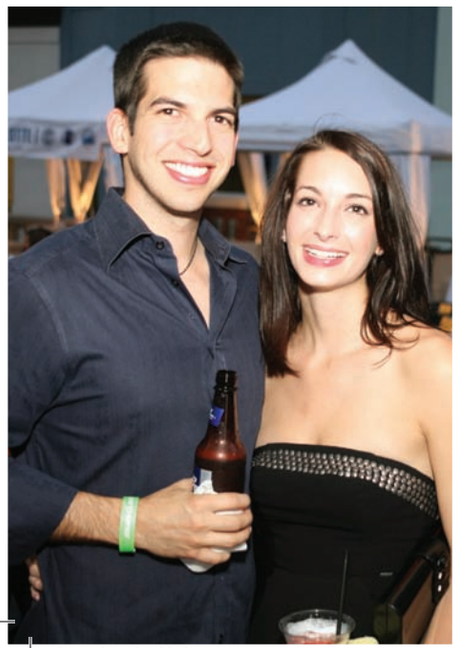
the seen

pictures: catch light studio
george lainis

All the lovely people came out for the Rock the Republic fashion show at the Epicentre on Aug. 27. The fashion-forward boutique Revolution put this evening together with Rock & Republic denim. The evening was brought to a froth with an '80s metal band and DJ 5ive.



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the seen

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Another delicious morsel has been added to the restaurant scene in town. Owner Brett McKee opened 15 North Roadside Kitchen by throwing an opening party for a bevy of friends. Everyone enjoyed the sparkling new spot and Chef Steve Jordan's scrumptious menu.

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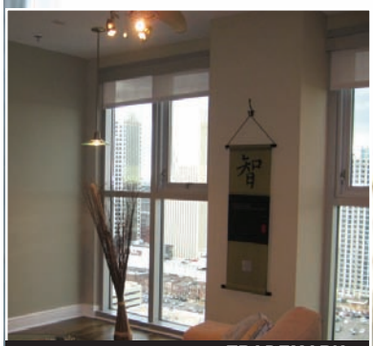

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pass the popcorn by Little Shiva

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SHORTCUTS

september 2010

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CONTRIBUTORS

Shelly Shepard, an editor/writer, called The Charlotte Observer home for over 10 years, writing headlines and copy editing countless front-page stories. Wanderlust has taken Shelly from teaching English in Prague, to living in a hut in Thailand. If not working, chances are you'll find her hiking. Professionally, Shelly's at home with a page of words in front of her, a mouse in hand and a deadline looming.

Charlotte native **Matt Kokenes** didn't have enough to do with a newborn boy at home, so he is now handling sales for Uptown Magazine and along with a partner, he has formed Trafk Media, a new marketing agency in town. He has also jumped back into the writing world and is writing the ongoing serial fiction short story *Duplicity*. Check it out starting on page 54.

Bryan Reed is a man of simple interests—among them, words, records, movies, and adjusting to life as a grownup (whatever that means). Since graduating from UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Bryan's been living the dream, working as the assistant editor of Charlotte-based music magazine *Shuffle* and freelancing for several publications, including *Tiny Mix Tapes* and several weekly newspapers across the Carolinas.

Balance, in life, as in meals, is the key to success. Balance, and perhaps a little juggling! Ask **Sue Bartlett**. When she isn't at work advocating for better mental health, in the kitchen designing delicious meals for her clients, hiking in the mountains with her husband, Tom, or giving cooking lessons, she's writing (and eating) for Uptown Magazine. You can e-mail Sue at suebartlett@carolina.rr.com, or visit her on the net at suechef.biz

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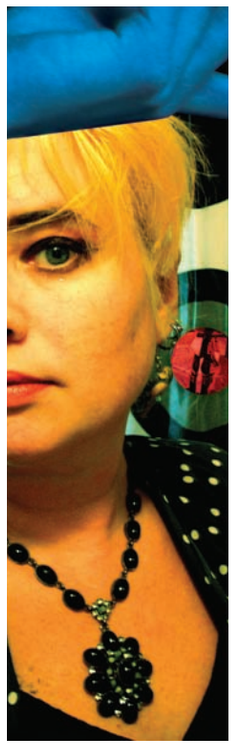
Peter Reinhart is the Chef on Assignment at Johnson & Wales University, which means he does whatever they ask him to do and goes wherever they send him. He's written seven books on bread, pizza, food and culture. In partnership with Pierre Bader, he opened Pie Town, an artisan pizzeria on Trade Street. And AS if he weren't busy enough, Peter is also *Uptown*'s Contributing Food Editor.

A man about town with his camera, **George Lanis** of Catch Light Studio has been photographing people in his native Charlotte for years. From friends' weddings to parties to family photos for the holidays, his work is creative and diverse, and he's always looking to show you in the best light. Check out catchlightonline.com for more.

September 10.indd 17 8/29/2010 5:50:31 PM

CONTRIBUTORS



name: Little Shiva

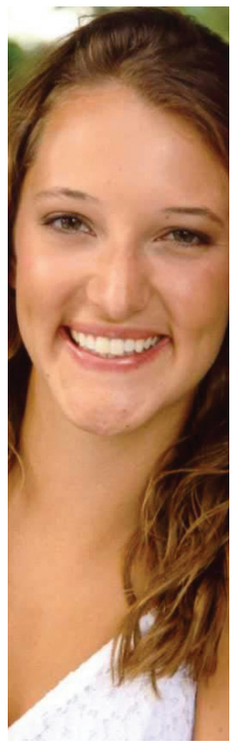
species: mutant

here for: the smell of ink on paper

interests: juxtaposition, transformation, mystery, clarity, the process of becoming, image and design

contributions to this issue: table of contents

website: littleshiva.com



Although a Hoosier at heart, **Jenn Burns** is currently loving the blue skies and sun of North Carolina as she attends Davidson College. She is beginning her junior year as an environmental studies major that focuses on food. As a result of her passion for food, she has lived on a sustainable meat farm, done some urban agriculture, and worked extensively to bring more local and sustainable food to Davidson College.

Photographer **Jim McGuire** has trouble defining himself in a few words, plus it's really weird to write stuff about yourself as if you were another person.
Basically Jim likes what he does and he still gets excited about going to work everyday. He's pretty good about being on time and doing what he says he's going to do. His wife Laura is his rock.
Jim's photographs appear in the fashion section of this month's issue.
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FROM THE PUBLISHER

The question I've been asking myself a lot lately is, how can I raise my girls to not be the stereotypical American consumer and to just be happy with what they have versus anxious about what they need to get.

It doesn't help that I think Chuck E. Cheese's is like a gateway drug. At 4, it starts with, "Daddy, can I go to Chuck E. Cheese?" – and then, before you know it, at 16, it's "Daddy, I NEED these $400 pair of Dolce & Gabbana jeans." It's hard enough to say no now, and Kate is just getting her game on. When she REALLY wants something, she'll cozy up to me, grab my face, give me kisses on my cheek and say, "pleeaassse, Daddy?" Most of the time, it doesn't work – but sometimes, she suckers me in. And by sometimes, I mean 90 percent of the time.

This last time she popped the question, I asked her, "Where in the world have you heard of Chuck E. Cheese's before?" The shocking surprise was that she had heard it on TV.

I thought the TV network Nickelodeon had my back with Nick Jr. – you know, no commercials and programming created to negatively influence the young mind. It even has these monologues before the shows start that deliver a warm and fuzzy directive to any parent who might be passing by. Something like, "Dora the Explorer promotes understanding of the Spanish language, interracial cooperation and a general disdain for nuclear proliferation." I threw in that last one for comedic effect, but the other two are real. But while watching yet another exciting Dora episode, waiting for it to end and for tubby time to begin, I noticed that AFTER the show there is an interlude sponsored by Chuck E. Cheese's. DAMN! It's not really a commercial, but it's still something that probably involves subliminal messaging and implants a desire for bad pizza and future consumerism.

I am powerless against Dora and the interludes between Dora, sponsored by all the corporations planting messages in Kate's head. And what happens when the floodgates open and she graduates to the regular cartoons embedded with so many commercials that it's hard to tell the difference between the show and the commercial?

Living the Quaker life seems a bit extreme, and growing up, kids who couldn't watch TV at home would come over to my house and watch so intently that they seemed to absorb the rays emitted from the television cabinet. We already read every night, and she runs around all day at school. I can't just not have TVs in the house! My only respite from the world is Netflix from 9:15 to 10 every night. I'm at a loss.

I guess just like selling my 1974 Toyota Landcruiser after getting married, I'll have to compromise. At home, we'll only eat good pizza from the Pizza Peel, buy her jeans from the Gap and Mom can take her to Chuck E. Cheese's.

~Todd Trimakas
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Stepping Up

TWO N.C. ARTISTS MOVE TO BIGGER LABELS

Horseback – "The Invisible Mountain" (Relapse)

Lost In The Trees – "All Alone In An Empty House" (ANTI-)

They are two dissimilar albums by two dissimilar artists with, seemingly, little more than circumstance in common. Horseback with "The Invisible Mountain" and Lost In The Trees with "All Alone In An Empty House" have recently entered conversations far afield of their shared hometown of Chapel Hill, N.C.

Both North Carolina acts have found themselves the subject of renewed interest as large and moneyed record labels release their latest works. Horseback has found its home with Relapse Records, the metal megalith that spawned the careers of Mastodon and Baroness, while Lost In The Trees has settled its roots with ANTI- Records, the indie sophisticates who lay claim to Neko Case (LITT's new tourmate) and Tom Waits, among others. For those already familiar with either artist, such opportunities come as little surprise.

Horseback's effort – a sprawling, meditative journey that moves through elements of metal, psychedelic rock, spaghetti Western soundtracks and experimental music, and is set as a metaphor for self-discovery – has already been issued on CD by one label, and vinyl on another. It garnered breathless praise from critics the first time around, and it is, in a word, magnificent.

The band's leader (and often sole constant), Jenks Miller, is an accomplished experimental musician, with a penchant for exploring sounds as a form of therapy. His patient and meditative direction turns even the harshest moments of the "The Invisible Mountain"– and between the down-tuned, feedback-laced guitars and Miller's croaking black metal vocals, there's plenty of harsh – into contemplative, even calming passages. Here, as in life, tumult is a given, but the tenacity to continue the journey in the face of darkness and harsh timbres ultimately yields the album's redemptive summit, "Hatecloud Dissolving Into Nothing."

Likewise, Lost In The Trees became local favorites long before the Chapel Hill micro-label Trekky Records issued the album in a vinyl/CD/digital combo-pack. Bandleader Ari Picker had already shown his compositional ambition with the charming pop band The Never, and he turned Lost In The Trees into a project marrying classical grandiosity with intimate folk to wrestle with a tormented past.

Picker speaks, often as if to himself or in flashbacks, in spare folk tunes offset and expanded by his orchestral preoccupations. At its core, "All Alone" is a collection of intimate folk tunes, but one imagines that exorcising the struggles of a painful childhood in an abusive environment doesn't lend itself well to subdued melodies. The symphony that plays against Picker's meditations arrives as an echo to his speaker's conflict, and as a salve against it.

Both albums, through their different approaches, arrive at the same spot. While Miller's quest leads to self-awareness or a vanquished challenge, and Picker's is a thoughtful release of repressed emotions, both compel the listener to follow along into a difficult but finally redemptive conclusion. These records speak to the heart.

Both albums have grown slowly since their initial releases, winning listeners by providing more than idle entertainment. For all the adventurous musical decisions Miller makes, or for the singular confluence of folk, pop and classical Picker provides, both songwriters triumph because of their ability to arrest us and to cause us to look at ourselves by looking into their minds.

That they'd eventually reach a pair of ears with the power to give their recordings the audience they deserve was all but inevitable. U

Reach Bryan at bryan.c.reed@gmail.com
For samples of these albums go to uptownclt.com

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Sky Sailing – "An Airplane Carried Me To Bed" (Sky Harbor Records/Universal Republic)

Sky Sailing, Adam Young's pre-Owl City project (reissued, presumably to capitalize on the Owl City buzz) won't convince the naysayers. But for the thousands who bought into Young's nice-guy croon and polite melodies, Sky Sailing is just one more handwritten note from the shy songwriter, just less the electronic doodads.

Zo! – "SunStorm" (The Foreign Exchange Music)

D.C.-based R&B producer Zo! might not conjure the same fame as a Timbaland or Swizz Beatz, but his compositions, buoyed by a bevy of hip-hop and R&B's alternative luminaries – YahZarah and Phonte, for example – reveal a sophistication and sensibility uncommon in the Top 40.

S. Carey – "All We Grow" (Jagjaguwar)

Slow and lonesome, like an empty Midwestern highway, S. Carey's album-length love letter becomes a close replica of how it feels to miss someone. The Bon Iver sideman's solo debut is a quiet triumph of awake-at-night musings and heartaching hopes set to gracefully repetitious washes of sound.

Git Some – "Loose Control" (Alternative Tentacles)

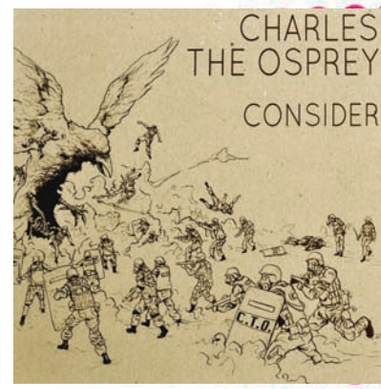
From the demise of post-hardcore mainstays Planes Mistaken For Stars, Git Some bursts like a bald tire, careening wildly and shattering burly hard-rock riffs into needle-like crystals littered across the blacktop. But this crew's noise rock is as reined in as any other's and keeps the song ever at its center, a much-needed gyroscope in a disorienting spree.

Electric Sunset – "Electric Sunset" (K)

With humid electro-pop more suited for a basement party than an uptown club, Electric Sunset fights sinking into the receding chillwave foam by turning Toro Y Moi's melodic mirages into late-night delirium, less sunsoaked days than hot, sticky nights. Hints of Daft Punk stomp make this effort's pulse a bit stronger, too.

Charles The Osprey – "Consider" (Friction)

This Michigan duo's debut LP plays with veteran finesse, tossing off mind-melting math-rock like it's three-chord punk. The head-scratchingly talented outfit's greatest gift, it seems, is less in its prodigious application of musical gymnastics to instrumental rock than in its ability to obliterate the notion of what just two instruments are capable of.



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words & pictures:
jenn burns

THE FARM LIFE

The baby broilers are screaming for food. In hopes of appeasing them, I climb into their temporary nursery and 500 white puffballs immediately attack my boots, making it extremely challenging to move to their various feeding dishes. Most aren't very bright – they would get their food a lot faster if I were able to walk – but sometimes I am made the fool when the escapees dart just beyond my reach and I am left grasping air.

Yet again, I ask myself, why am I here? I am a rising junior at Davidson College, and I could have had a flashy job in New York City or be a sophisticated intern on The Hill. Instead, I left my 1,500 friends at Davidson to share some soil with 1,500 birds, 30 cows and 70 sheep – all of which aren't nearly as friendly as the people I left behind. I learn of my friends' adventures in Beirut, at Cambridge and in the south of France when my phone catches the weak signal. I am alone – and really, really dirty.

shack and the outhouse

My passion is food. I love it, and not just eating it (although that is my favorite part). In fact, I created an environmental studies major that includes every food-related class Davidson offers. Food has led me to most of the books on my bookshelf, to new and unique specialty shops and artisans around town, and to numerous farms. I am a vat of worthless food knowledge – did you know carrots were never originally orange; rather, they were bred to be so hundreds of years ago? I know where and when every farmers market is in the city and could tell you about almost every restaurant in town. Yet, until this point, I had never produced an ounce of food, not even a backyard tomato plant or bit of basil.

Adam Moody changed all of that. In addition to his farm in Browns Valley, Ind., Adam owns and operates three full-service butcher shops in the suburbs of Indianapolis, my hometown. You cannot find these kinds of meats in a grocery store. Adam isn't a certified organic farmer and he doesn't tout any other name. He simply believes in sustainability, both environmental and economic – hence, the butcher shops. As one of his employees, Michael O'Donnell, explains, "You gotta take care of the land; it is as easy as that."

You see, everything grows from the land, so it is of utmost importance to treat it well. A farm is a full-circle operation, in that everything occurs there – feed grows, which then nourishes the animals, who then provide income for the farmer to start the cycle anew. The Moodys grow corn, soybeans and spelt for their animals. Adam says, "I understand why people put livestock on concrete – it's easy!" But the easy path is not something in which Adam believes – he knows he could make more money faster, but he also knows it degrades the health of the animal and, in turn, that of the human consumer. It's also not environmentally sustainable. So, instead, his cows spend their days walking and eating in the pasture. "You must show people that it can be done, that it is possible to run an economically and environmentally sustainable operation," he says, expanding on his philosophy. You can be green, but you must also make some green.

My first trip to his butcher shop was during the start of my summer vacation. On that day, I asked my usual questions about the meats – which, I will admit, were rather detailed. Soon enough, Adam was asking me questions. Not 10 minutes later he offered me a home on his farm, because, as he said, "If you want to do anything in the food world, you must know where your food comes from." He would pay my room and board – all I had to do was work. Maybe it was the Vicodin I was still on from a recent surgery, but I said yes.

And so, two weeks later, I packed my bags and headed west, about an hour out of town to the intersection of corn and soybeans. Indianapolis isn't usually thought of as a large city, but compared with Browns Valley, I lived in Shanghai. Upon arriving at the farm, I was immediately put to work.

Days started at 7 a.m., and 6 a.m. to beat the heat if we needed to pull weeds. This farm has chosen not to grow genetically modified soybeans; instead, it grows the beans like our grandparents did – sans Round-up. So, there are weeds – which we pulled from the rows, and rows, of beans. Although a bit hard on the back, it was a nice way to get to know my two new friends: Isaac, Adam's son and manager of all on-farm operations, and Michael (not the same one from the store), a mechanical engineer who, while pursuing a doctorate in sustainable-energy technologies, realized that the only truly sustainable option was to change conventional farming techniques. Before he could preach what he believed in, though, he had to practice.

Living on a farm was a different world. Luckily, I was used to living in a dorm room, so my "shack," as it was lovingly called, was fine, albeit a bit hot and muggy. To say the least, AC would have been appreciated on days when the heat index hit 115 degrees. Our day was over when the work was done. Unfortunately, farm life seems to carry an infinite amount of work – luckily, though, it always gets dark ... eventually. The culture was different from what I knew and from what I was expecting. Technology was ever-present. IPhones served for all forms of communication and as the only access to Internet.

But even with technology, we were always at the mercy of nature. It seemed as if everything depended on how wet or dry the ground was. Despite working harder than I ever thought possible (one evening I wrote in my journal, "Rainier cherries are the elixir of life" – clearly, the heat and exhaustion had gotten to me), various Moody relatives who live or work for the farm in some way didn't seem to have much – that is, if you measure "much" only in the monetary sense. Others, however, may deem them kings because they give away beef as presents.

I also found that some things on the farm were more stereotypical than I could have imagined, such as watching the sun set over the fields from my hand-built wooden porch while eating eggs that I had gathered just a few hours before. Time slowed down and many daily stressors seemed to be missing here.

Only a fraction of my day was spent working directly with the animals, despite them being the money makers. They were, however, the most fun. My favorite cow, already the odd chocolate-brown cow out, loved to lay in the shade with all four legs pointed straight out to the side. The eight cows that lived not more than 10 feet from where I stayed mooed at me every time I went outside. As I walked around the hens' pasture to check for any holes in the fence, almost all of the 300 chickens would follow me; I was the point of our flying V formation.

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I think it would have been hard for me to have been less qualified for this job. Isaac and Michael were kind enough to let me "help" in whatever they were doing. As Michael said, jokingly, "Fixing a combine is a part of the liberal arts education, right?" Wrong. In fact, my core curriculum at Davidson did not prepare me at all for this endeavor. I had never before used a ratchet or a socket; honestly, I didn't know the difference between the two, let alone did I have a clue how to fix a radiator. Nonetheless, I organized, read the manual allowed, cleaned chains and pumped the breaks while the fluid was changed below. Believe it or not, slaughtering chickens had been a part of my freshman-year writing class, but slaughtering 100 birds that I had seen grow up was a bit more challenging.

I worked hard at whatever the task of the moment was, collecting eggs, grinding feed, harvesting hay or moving hen houses to new pasture. But I just don't think I am meant for farm life. Just as I thought I was proving that I could hold my own, I had to go to the hospital after a nasty fall on a fence. Not only was I missing the hard skills, but I made cultural faux pas as well. I brought up World Cup games, thinking that it would be a great way to bond with the boys. It turns out, though, no one has cable. Isaac dreams of one day taking college classes, perhaps in forest management or creative writing; meanwhile, all I know is academia. I so wanted to belong, but it was obvious I was inherently different – right down to my pink Sperry rain boots I wore to navigate the mud and muck after the rain.

As with most things in life, looking back I seem to remember that even with my troubles, things weren't all that bad. I really enjoyed spending the day outside and talking with Isaac and Michael. As we worked, we talked about which superpowers we would choose if we could (Isaac chose the ability to learn anything), and Michael helped me brainstorm ideas for my thesis (the most interesting was the feasibility of sustainable farming on a medium to large scale). These guys were thought-provoking, while my friends back home just seem to talk about each other. After I learned the importance of going to the outhouse for the last time before dark, an outdoor toilet seemed the equivalent to one inside. And I had even perfected attracting bugs with my headlamp. Granted they fell into the bunk with me as they died, but it was better than them buzzing in my ear as I tried to fall sleep.

I almost miss the calluses on my fingers from lifting buckets; I guess the operative word is almost. I learned more from my time on the farm than I could from reading any book or from seeing any movie. Life there wasn't bad – it was simply different, with a capital D. Isaac never went to college, yet to do what he does I would need numerous specialists – a mechanic, electrician, carpenter, vet … the list goes on.

Many people think that grass-fed beef or organic products have astronomical prices, but knowing the labor and time that goes into those animals, those prices are a steal. It is unbelievable how much I now value my food. If more people spent a little time on a sustainable farm, farmers would suddenly become the new doctors and professors of our society. They are invaluable. These farmers may not have cash, but they are richer for what they do – and that is improve the environment while offering precious nutrition. Can you imagine life without food? U

Reach Jenn at jeburns@davidson.edu

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interview
WITH NEW CHEFS

chef bill schutz

Chefs come and go – sometimes just as we're learning to love their food and have become regulars at their restaurants. Sometimes they open their own place, move to another city, leave because of "creative differences" with the owners or perhaps it simply comes time to retire. Pity the new chef who has to take the helm of a restaurant already stamped with the popular style of a predecessor. (Well, maybe pity is a little strong – there are far worse fates, such as getting fired, which happens a lot in cities such as San Francisco and New York, but not so often here in Charlotte, where chef and owner egos are more under control.)

It's a challenge to win over not only the regular customers, but also the loyal kitchen staff and the sous and line chefs who remain behind. Sometimes things get better than they were under the previous regime, inspiring the regular diners to stick around and new followers

words: peter reinhart
pictures: todd trimakas

chef anoosh shariat

to join the throng. But sometimes folks yearn for "the good old days, and the menu we loved before Chef So-and-So messed with it."

Two popular center-city restaurants recently went through executive chef makeovers: the EpiCentre's innovative Mediterranean-themed Mez, and the Trade and Tryon locavore mainstay, Sonoma, which serves American regional bistro fare. So far, word on the street has been positive about both changes, so Uptown contacted both of the new chefs: Anoosh Shariat of Mez, who rolled the dice and relocated from Louisville in June, and Bill Schutz, who joined Sonoma about a year ago, having already had a local following from his stints at Bentleys, as the special-events chef at Johnson & Wales and as executive chef at the Ballantyne Country Club. We asked them both the same questions, and here's what they had to say.

CHEF BILL SCHUTZ

Uptown: You've taken over the kitchen of one of the city's most popular restaurants. Tell us a little about your culinary journey and how you ended up here.
Schutz: My culinary journey began 30 years ago cooking in seafood restaurants on Long Island. As I became more serious about cooking, I made my way into high-profile New York City restaurants and eventually opened my own. I have also been able to travel and spend time working in restaurants in France, Spain and Singapore. I moved to Charlotte six years ago in search of a solid opportunity in a growing city. I was approached by Pierre Bader a little over a year ago to take over as executive chef for the Sonoma Restaurant Group.

Uptown: Can you describe the culinary vision that you bring to the kitchen? How do you convey that vision to your team and what kind of challenges have you encountered in trying to implement it?
Schutz: My vision is pretty standard. I believe in keeping food simple with a focus on fresh flavors and clean presentation. Consistency is the key. If a customer returns to have a dish that they loved, and it doesn't taste the same the second or third time they eat it, then we are coming up short. I always want people to leave our restaurants feeling satisfied. The only way to get this thought process through to your cooks is to coach them on each dish. If they make something that isn't up to par, then they have to throw it away and start all over again.

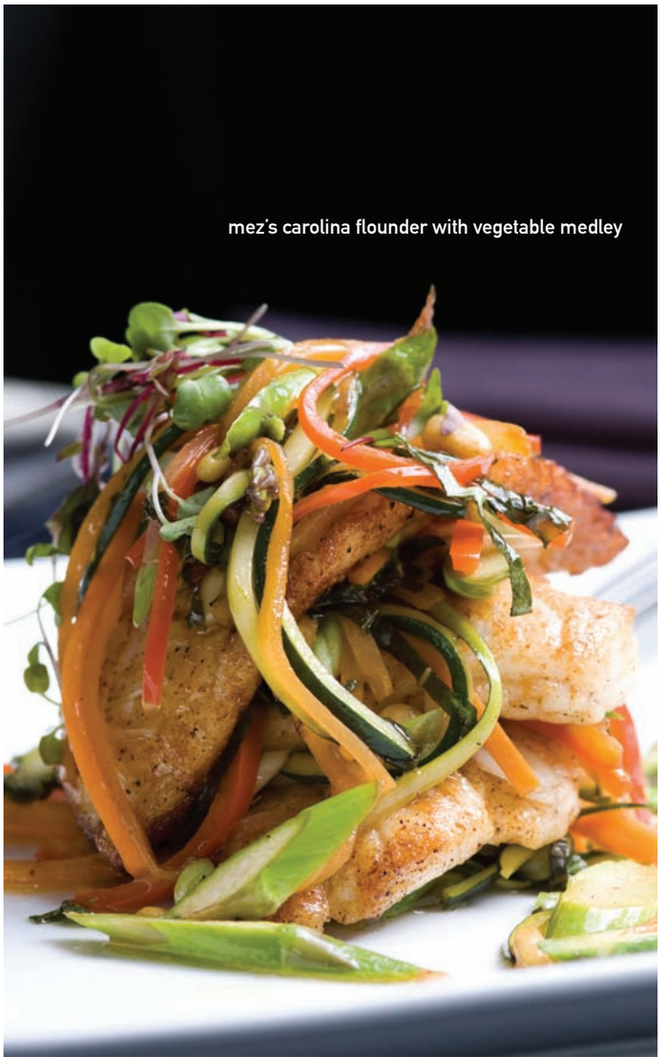
Uptown: Can you describe your strategy or game plan on how to introduce your food to the menu without losing the restaurant's regulars? How much of your predecessor's menu have you kept and what did you tweak to make the items your own?
Schutz: When taking over an existing kitchen, I believe it is very important to be patient. You never want to completely change a menu immediately. I think you can clean things up a little, but you need to introduce new dishes gradually. This gives the cooks a chance to learn your style. It also introduces a new style to your regulars and gives them time to earn your trust. Shortly after I took over, we changed concepts at Sonoma and created an a la carte menu, along with some small plates. Nothing was left over on the menu from the previous chef.

Uptown: When you go out to eat, what kind of food do you prefer and what other restaurants in town serve the kind of food that inspires you?
Schutz: I love simple food. I become disappointed when I go out to eat and the chef tries to take what is already good and add unnecessary elements to it. Simple is always best.

Uptown: What kind of food legacy would you like to leave for those who follow you, and how would you like to be remembered by those who eat your food?
Schutz: I hope to be remembered as a chef who has a deep respect for cooking. I also hope to be remembered as a chef who gives his cooks a chance to learn and operate on all stations in the kitchen. I feel that as a chef it is vital to get to know your team. You need to learn each individual's strengths and weaknesses. If you are not able to help them improve on technical weaknesses, then you are not giving them the tools they need to reach their full potential.

aria's spare ribs with hoisin glaze

CHEF ANOOSH SHARIAT


mez's carolina flounder with vegetable medley

Interview with Chef Anoosh Shariat

Uptown: You've taken over the kitchen of one of the city's most popular restaurants. Tell us a little about your culinary journey and how you ended up here.

Anoosh: I have spent nearly 20 years in Louisville as chef and owner of some of the most respected restaurants in the city. Prior to coming to Kentucky, I spent years cooking in Germany, Switzerland and in the American Southwest. Because of some family and friend connections in North Carolina, I have been interested in this region of the country for a long time. Charlotte has a very vibrant dining scene and the team at Mez has been doing some exciting things since they opened two years ago. The timing just worked out for me to move to Charlotte and take over the kitchen.

I feel that I am a very creative chef and I like a challenge. Moving to a new market after having built my reputation for two decades in Louisville will definitely provide a challenge! I am so impressed with the team at Mez and the abundance of ingredients from this region, so I think the chance I have taken will pay off.

Uptown: Can you describe the culinary vision that you bring to the kitchen? How do you convey that vision to your team and what kind of challenges have you encountered in trying to implement it?

Anoosh: It is all about the flavor and creativity for me. I have an affinity for combining regional ingredients with European flavors and techniques. The amazing abundance of local artisanal producers, farmers and small food manufacturers here in North and South Carolina has gotten me really excited about developing the new menu throughout the seasons. The previous menu at Mez was more globally inspired, and I am adapting it to include more regional products.

Uptown: Can you describe your strategy or game plan on how to introduce your food to the menu without losing the restaurant's regulars? How much of your predecessor's menu have you kept and what did you tweak to make the items your own?

Anoosh: The first thing I did when I moved to Charlotte, even before I started working on the new menu, was to study what our customers were ordering and, then, really work the dining room getting to know them. I wanted to get feedback on what they liked. The last thing I wanted to do was take off signature favorites.

I also really listened to my team, both in the front and the back of the house, to get their input on what had worked well in the past and what needed to change. My goal was to add more regional influences, but at the same time, keep the focus of the menu. We launched our new menu in July with about 60 percent new items. We are now (at the time of this interview) in the middle of summer, when fresh produce is abundant, so we really work to incorporate the freshness of summer into the menu. Some of the items featuring local products include summer gazpacho, seared tuna with smoky ratatouille and red onion marmalade, pan-roasted Ashley Farms chicken with summer succotash, saffron orzo, pomegranate glaze, and a cold-smoked pork chop with stewed okra and Asiago stone-ground grits.

Uptown: When you go out to eat, what kind of food do you prefer and what other restaurants in town serve the kind of food that inspires you?

Anoosh: One of the things that drew me to Charlotte was the vibrant culinary community. Since I am new to town, and am working hard to launch my own new menu, I haven't had the opportunity to go out a lot. I like to eat creative and well-flavored foods like what Bruce Moffett at Barrington's or Tom Condron at The Liberty is serving. There are also some great restaurants in the Uptown and SouthPark areas.

Uptown: What kind of food legacy would you like to leave for those who follow you, and how would you like to be remembered by those who eat your food?

Anoosh: As a chef, you want to be on the cutting edge of the culinary world but at the same time stay true to your passion and mission for cooking. During my tenure in Louisville, I built a reputation with my guests that made them more comfortable with trying new things. I like opening my guests' minds to something they may not have chosen based on their past experiences. I look forward to cooking for the folks in Charlotte and hope they will enjoy what my team and I can bring to the table.

Reach Peter at recipetesters@yahoo.com
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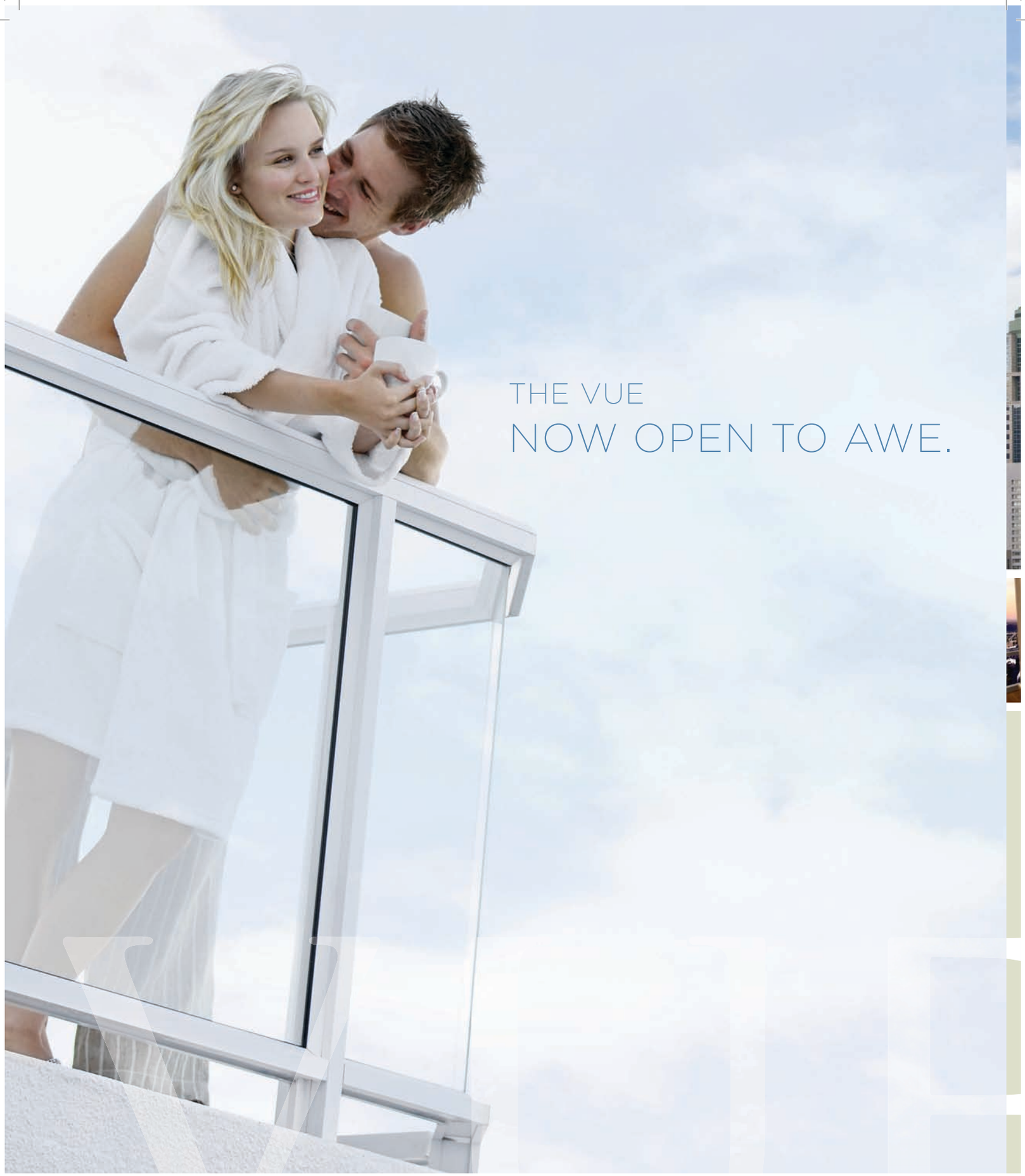

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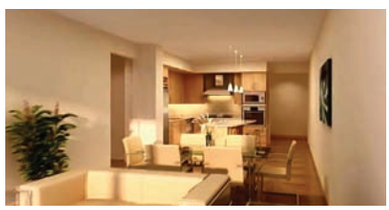

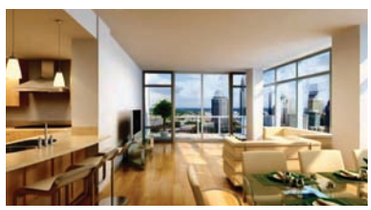

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words: sue bartlett
pictures: todd trimakas

necessity
& THE SMALL PLATE

First, there was a fruit fly. And a glass of sherry. The fruit fly, having a thirst for something sweet, made a beeline for it (forgive the mixed metaphor). Determining that it was every bit as good as he had imagined, the fly told all of his friends. They flocked to try it.

Next, there was an Andalusian tavern owner whose guests also had a thirst for the lovely, sweet sherry, but who had to fight off the flies for the right to drink it. In fear of losing his paying customers to the freeloading flies, the host devised a way to protect the sherry. He covered each glass with a slice of bread. Problem solved – no more fruit flies.

The grateful guests adored the absence of the flies, loved the deliciously sweet sherry, but needed a little

something to nibble on. All they had was the plain, dry bread. So, the innovative host plopped a few pieces of cured ham on top of the bread. And the guests returned night after night. Soon, other establishments, seeing the first guy's success, began doing likewise. The original idea was tweaked and embellished, the "Joy of Cooking" cookbook says, and each tavern developed its own specialty. Soon, it became fashionable to move from tavern to tavern, drinking sherry and sampling the various tapas (Spanish for "topper"). And, ¡olé! A whole new way to dine was born and Plato was proved to be correct – necessity is the mother of invention.

Fast-forward to present-day Uptown Charlotte, where many restaurants are still being inventive. Although there isn't a lot of sherry consumed here on an average night – and, with windows and air conditioning, fruit flies aren't a huge issue – some necessities still require a tapas-like solution.

Necessity No. 1: What to eat. Say you and five friends are meeting for dinner. Two of you have a taste for something Asian and exotic. One of you wants something meaty. Two others are totally vegetarian. The last of you simply doesn't know what she wants but she's watching her figure anyway. This situation could result in either a knock-down, drag-out fistfight or in a stalemate that ends with a bowl of cereal and a beer back at the house.

Necessity No. 2: The "I wish I had what he's having" syndrome. Be honest – you know what I'm talking about. You've studied the menu, considered the choices, consulted the waiter and, when all is said and done, the dish the guy to the left ordered always looks better.

Necessity No. 3: So many restaurants, so little time. Charlotte is blessed by a wealth of very fine restaurants, all of which have beautiful menus and exceptional wine lists. Life is short and waistlines grow. You need a way to experience all of it without looking like the Michelin Man.

Invention: The evolved tapa, better known as the small plate!

Small plates are a collection of hot or cold appetizers that make up a snack or a full-fledged meal. And, if the number of new restaurants in Uptown that serve tapas is any indication, their popularity is growing. What began as cured meat on a slice of bread has been, in truly American fashion, adapted to fit an ever-increasing range of cuisines. Some inventive chefs are even taking their most popular entrees, adjusting the size of the portions and serving them as small plates. The appetizer, or starter, is no longer the warmup act for the main performance. It has become a star in its own right.

Although you can find small-plate restaurants practically anywhere, they seem to thrive best in areas where the residents consider walking half the joy of living there – just like Uptown Charlotte. Strolling from place to place and enjoying the sights and sounds as day turns to evening creates an atmosphere all its own. And a walk between courses has the added advantage of working off a few calories before the next glass of wine and small plate.

An obvious question arises whenever the word "small" is used in relation to food. Will I go home hungry? Can a person with a normal appetite actually be satisfied by a tapas-style meal? There are theoretical answers to these questions, but who needs theories. We want facts. And so, with the aide of a few friends, I did some research. On two separate occasions, we ate our way through five small-plate restaurants, each with very different styles. And, like all good researchers, we kept notes:

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bruschetta

EVENING	
1	1
	STOP

THE WOODEN VINE
LOCATION: 231 N. Tryon St.
FIRST IMPRESSION: Lives up to its name. Beautiful, handcrafted wood. Owner-designed, with arty interior. Warm and intimate. Street-side seating.
WAITSTAFF: Friendly. Knowledgeable. Suggested pairings for dishes.Wine list: Intriguingly unusual, multinational collection.
CUISINE: Mediterranean.
GROUP CHOICES: Bruschetta (excellent); five-item cheese and charcuterie board (hard to pick just five items!); pesto and goat cheese tartlet (creamy and delicious, with a puff pastry crust and components perfectly in proportion to one another).
MOST UNUSUAL MENU ITEM: Dill Havarti veggie pizza.
OVERALL IMPRESSION: The perfect beginning! Dishes were light, but satisfying. Appetite piqued for next stop.

the wooden vine

dill havarti veggie pizza

wild mushrooms

EVENING

1 2 STOP

THE DANDELION MARKET

LOCATION: 118 W. Fifth St.

FIRST IMPRESSION: Could have been in Dublin! Had the look and feel of an Irish pub. A place to have a rollicking good time. Big tables, sturdy enough for a rugby team.

WAITSTAFF: Very friendly. Eager to explain the small-plate concept.

WINE LIST: 25 bottles for $25! Some unusual vintners, but usual varietals. Has craft beers.

CUISINE: British Isles and northern European. Hearty fare. Rich sauces. Small-plate-sized entree items. Food with a man in mind.

GROUP CHOICES: Fried artichoke hearts (battered and deep fried); sauteed wild mushrooms in a Marsala, cream and rosemary sauce (excellent); old-school meatballs in a tomato basil sauce (satisfied the meat lovers among us); flatbread with duck confit, Brie, apricot preserves, rosemary and a splash of Balsamic vinegar (unusual combination that was tasty but not as "ducky" as we were expecting).

MOST UNUSUAL MENU ITEM: Fried sage leaves with sea salt and garlic sauce.

OVERALL IMPRESSION: Fear of starvation totally erased from our minds! Would be a great place to spend a chilly, fall evening with enough friends to sample everything.

dandelion market

proscuitto crustini

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EVENING

1

3

STOP

PRESS

LOCATION: 333 W. Trade St.

FIRST IMPRESSION: Definitely a place for people serious about wine! Sleek, contemporary interior. Breezy, comfortable outdoor seating.

WAITSTAFF: Pleasant and accommodating. (Note: We were fortunate enough to meet a staff member who was extremely knowledgeable about wine. She was able to suggest alternative selections based on the wines we had enjoyed in the past. Her choice for the table was exceptional.)

WINE LIST: Extensive!

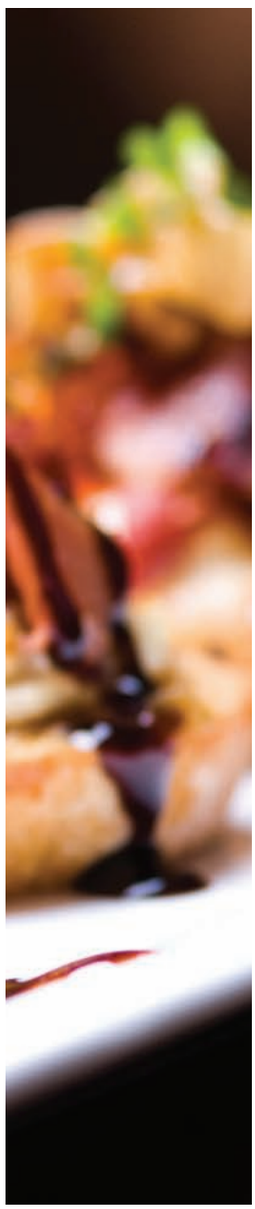
CUISINE: Mediterranean with some interesting twists.

GROUP CHOICES: (We zeroed in on the desserts.) Melon wrapped in prosciutto (refreshingly light); chocolate-raspberry tart (rich, but not as decadent as it sounds); nutella panini (very unusual and not as sweet as one would expect).

MOST UNUSUAL MENU ITEM: Fried egg and grilled cheese BLT.

OVERALL IMPRESSION: Must go back. Awed by the quality of the wine, but couldn't do justice to the chef's efforts. We were simply too full! More research required.

fried egg & grilled cheese blt



melon wrapped in prosciutto

press

duck spring rolls

kalbi lettuce wraps

enso

EVENING

2 1

STOP

ENSO
LOCATION: Epicentre
FIRST IMPRESSION: Elegant. Stylish. A restaurant fit for a very special occasion.
WAITSTAFF: Warm and welcoming. Well-trained in the art of making the guest feel special. Knowledgeable.
WINE LIST: Extensive and unusual.
CUISINE: Asian fusion.
GROUP CHOICES: Asian barbecued grouper bites (panko breaded and perfectly flash-fried; sauce did not overpower the delicate fish); jumbo lump-crab spring rolls (creamy and packed with crab); green curry beef yakitori (spicy without being painful); kalbi lettuce wraps (meltingly tender beef, tiny edible nasturtiums – a dish both beautiful and delicious); Chilean sea bass sashimi (unusual presentation, but flavorful).
MOST UNUSUAL MENU ITEM: Duck egg rolls.
OVERALL IMPRESSION: Presentation was impeccable! This cuisine is perfectly suited for small-plate dining. Takes Asian fusion to a new level.

EVENING

2 | 2

STOP

SOLÉ SPANISH GRILLE
LOCATION: 1608 E. Blvd.
FIRST IMPRESSION: This is the mother ship. Totally Spanish – in decor, art and live Spanish guitar music. Comfortable and covered outdoor seating available.
WAITSTAFF: Extremely warm and friendly.
WINE LIST: Primarily Spanish. Excellent Sangria!
CUISINE: Spanish tapas.

GROUP CHOICES: Gambas al ajillo (sauteed shrimp in a lovely olive oil garlic sauce); gratinadas (scallops baked in a Parmesan cream sauce – plate-licking rich); chorizo salteado (sauteed Spanish sausages in a tomato sauce – tender sausage, light sauce); mejillones diablo (sauteed mussels in a mildly spiced tomato sauce with slivers of ham – the sauce was superb, and the mussels were perfectly cooked).
MOST UNUSUAL MENU ITEM: Calamares de cabrales (fried calamari tossed with garlic blue cheese).
OVERALL IMPRESSION: Delicious example of Spanish cuisine; probably heavier than the traditional Andalusian tapa, but with a spot-on flavor profile. (Note: Group voted to forgo a third stop. Learned from previous night's experience.)

calamares de cabrales

solé

chorizo salteado

words: shelly shepard
pictures: todd trimakas

V-Day Minus 1:

Meat. It's what's for dinner at my house.

And lunch … and occasionally, breakfast (Canadian bacon, anyone?).

But, a few weeks back I decided that, for one week, I, Shelly Shepard, was going to embrace vegetarianism.

My mom's response when I told her about my plan? Well, let's just say I can't remember when I've heard her laugh so hard (she actually seemed to be giggling) or for so long.

My brain battled with my belly about the idea since I came up with it. I don't know whether it's possible to find a less-likely candidate for vegetarianism than yours truly. I grew up on a farm (with chickens, pigs and cattle) in Kansas and rarely went one meal, let alone 21 in a row, without eating something that had once clucked, oinked or mooed. My typical dinner plate was a resting ground for the leading characters in "Old McDonald Had a Farm."

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And, although I was gleeful about it at the time, my mother's reluctance to force vegetables past my childish lips did little to form healthy eating habits in me. Until I was 20 or so, my veggie repertoire consisted of green beans, corn on the cob and potatoes (yes, I know ... a spud isn't really a veggie).

I decided to tackle this a little differently than, say, how I'd approach starting a diet on a Monday. I hadn't loaded up my fridge with "permissible" foods, although much of my usual groceries were "allowed" as a vegetarian. And I didn't fill up on my favorite "meaty" foods before starting, although I did savor a lovely turkey wrap for supper.

And so, like any semi-intelligent Modern Day woman, I headed to the Internet for advice. Take it slow and ease into the vegetarian lifestyle, several sites advised (uh, sorry, one meatless week is the best I can commit to); experiment with a variety of vegetables until you find meals that you enjoy, other experts recommended (does portobello, cremini and shitake count as "variety"?).

But as V-Day loomed, several thoughts swirled through my mind:

What will my dog, Kosmo, do for entertainment without the hope of finding even the tiniest meaty morsel as he Hoovers the kitchen floor?

Without my normal protein consumption, will I have enough energy for a serious workout at the gym?

Will I have the fortitude to make this a healthy experiment, rather than turning it into a week full of nothing but fruit, smoothies and peanut butter?

V-Day arrives

I knew I needed protein to help power me through my day and to keep hunger at bay, so, this first morning I go with a whole-wheat English muffin and almond butter. The rest of the day, I'm too busy and stressed to think much about food (this is an anomaly for me – typically, stress tends to make me think of nothing BUT food).

While definitely skimping on the veggies, I don't do too badly on Day 1: The rest of the day's food consists of whole grains, low-fat cheese, to-die-for fresh peaches, a mushroom-cheese omelet (for supper!) with salsa and a small side salad.

The hardest part? Scouring the ingredient list every time I wanted to put something (other than a fruit or veggie) in my mouth. You never know what those sneaky manufacturers can slide in – things like gelatin (the colorless, tasteless protein made from collagen, typically taken from cows, and used in a variety of prepared foods) and rennet, which is curdled milk scraped from a cow's stomach (now, doesn't THAT sound yummy?) and used in some cheeses, just to name two.

I go to bed dreaming of the Chick-fil-A cow ...

Day 2

This morning, I was actually excited about being a vegetarian. No, really! After breakfast, I was off to see The Wizard. I'm not sure whether he would appreciate the nickname, but that's how I view him. The Wizard is Erek Walaszczyk, a deli assistant at Earth Fare in SouthPark. I struck up a conversation with him recently while doing a little reconnaissance at Earth Fare's prepared-food counter. Erek's been a vegetarian for 10 years. "Running dead animals ... repeatedly over sharp metal so people can put it in their sandwiches wasn't exactly a thrilling prospect for me," Erek confesses. But the variety of vegetarian dishes offered at the store is definitely a nice perk, he says.

Erek quickly gave me a primer in the differences between a vegetarian, pescatarian and vegan. I'm embarrassed to admit that, yes, before my talk with Erek, I had foolishly hoped/thought that I could eat fish this week and still "qualify" as a vegetarian (nope – that would be a pescatarian. Damn!).

I asked Erek what the big vegetarian-friendly sellers are, especially for people who might be struggling with giving up meat. "The textured soy protein nuggets, definitely," Erek tells me. I eye the baskets of tan, flat chickenless "nuggets" with suspicion.

"Hmmm. Ohhh-kayy ..." I respond. "And which of these 'nuggets' (I'm tempted to wink conspiratorially or create air quotes with my fingers as I slowly enunciate the word) would you recommend, or say is the ... tastiest (again, I can barely keep the sarcasm out of my voice as I mouth 'tasty')?"

He then proceeds to point at the different types of soy nuggets, indicating that the plain ones taste better warm. (Better than what, I'm tempted to blurt out ...) The flavored ones, Erek says, are OK cold. I had to admit that the Pacific Rim soy nuggets with honey didn't "look" half bad.

As I timidly took a nibble of the

I actually feel as if I'm getting the hang of this. OK, so my veggie intake was still woefully low, but I'm not particularly hungry or desperately craving meat like I thought I would be.

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nugget sample that Erek offered me, I silently repeated to myself, over and over again like a culinary mantra: "It's chicken. It's chicken. It's chicken." My self-deception worked! I took a second bite, and a third. It's gone! Woo-hoo! I actually ate the whole thing without, well, depositing it onto Earth Fare's floor or, even worse, against Erek's spotless display case.

The other most popular vegetarian dishes include several types of quinoa, Emerald sesame kale and cranberry broccoli salad.

I scanned the other offerings in the case, trying desperately to ignore the REAL chicken (I sensed the golden-fried chicken strips beckoning me, almost as if they were real fingers, motioning to me to come closer ... closer.). But my resolve held, and my eyes landed on another familiar word: BARBECUE. My gaze screeches to a halt, however, as it slammed into the dish's second word: Tofu.

Suspiciously, I question Erek: "What EXACTLY does this taste like?" Surely, I think, it can't taste like barbecue REAL anything. (DISCLOSURE: As a native Kansan and former resident of Kansas City – and Dallas, Texas – I also don't consider what North Carolinians pass off as "barbecue" to be REAL barbecue. But, that's a topic for another day.)

"It's pretty similar to egg whites," Erek tells me. "But they're baked a long time to try to get the tofu a little crispy. Then they're mixed with barbecue sauce."

My head (and stomach) started to feel a little woozy at the thought of mixing barbecue sauce with semi-crispy baked egg whites, so I politely passed on the offer to try it. The almond and apple quinoa did, however, look fairly appetizing. I bought a small container of it and ¼ pound of the Pacific Rim nuggets. I was feeling inordinately proud and pleased with myself, but ... I was also feeling something else. And it wasn't pride welling up inside, I'm afraid. I tossed my vegetarian-friendly purchases into my basket and power walked back to the restroom.

I had exercised for a solid three hours earlier in the day, thrilled that I'd had the energy and stamina for such a marathon workout. But I was definitely not feeling energetic anymore. My stomach was doing flip-flops and loopity-loops. I barely made it into the bathroom stall in time. I know that some people have "sensitivities" to soy products – I didn't know if that's what was causing my stomach upset and diarrhea, but it seemed like a possibility.

Much later that evening, my boyfriend, Ed, came over to the house. My stomach, after a few queasy hours, was pretty much back to normal at this point. It was kind of late by the time we were ready for supper. And although Ed will eat just about anything, I didn't feel like forcing him to eat what I was eating tonight. After the earlier gastric gymnastics, I decided to just have some cheese and crackers. Ed was starving, so I naively offered to microwave some frozen Stouffer's meat lasagna for him. Halfway into the cooking cycle when it was time to stir it, I was sorely regretting my generosity.

It ... smelled ... incredible! We sat down to watch TV as he began to eat. I didn't know when my sense of smell had been nearly that heightened. Ed commented on how good the lasagna was. I hardly heard him as the gooey cheese and dripping red sauce mesmerized me. The zesty aroma drew me to him as much as (OK, more than!) any aftershave or scented soap he's ever worn.

Day 3

I actually feel as if I'm getting the hang of this. OK, so my veggie intake was still woefully low, but I'm not particularly hungry or desperately craving meat like I thought I would be.

Before starting the week, I'd also decided to try to boycott processed foods loaded with sugar. Like so many women, sugary treats (cookies, brownies, cake, ice cream, etc.) hold particular allure – and danger – for me. But so far, so good.

Ed and I played some racquetball and lifted weights, then came home for a late supper. He generously decided not to torture me with meat lasagna tonight, and instead made us each an omelet – mushroom and cheese, for me.

I did, however, experience a brief addiction-like withdrawal symptom later in the evening. I offered to make Ed a turkey sandwich for tomorrow's lunch, and as I lay the glistening white breast onto the whole-wheat bread, my hand shook oh-so slightly as the tip of my tongue circled my lips. But I grabbed hold of my resolve and stuffed the sandwich into a baggie before I did something I'd regret.

Day 4

Not so wisely, I ate very little throughout the day, "saving up" for the evening. My friend Melissa was taking

"Do you know what you'd like to drink?" she asks. Boy, do I. But, first things first. "Are your margaritas vegetarian-friendly?" I ask with a sheepish smile. "You know, the tequila – is it OK for vegetarians?"

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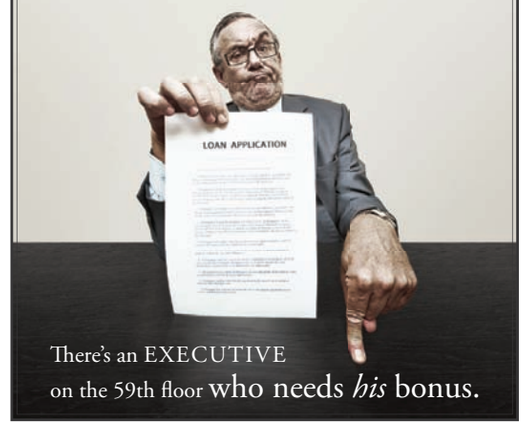

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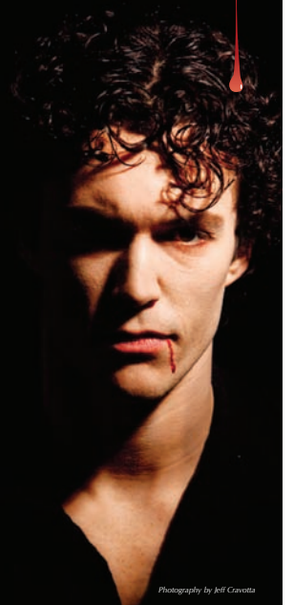

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me out for drinks, so I chose margaritas at Cantina 1511 on East Boulevard.

Melissa beat me there and already had a bowl of chips on the table as I sat down. I was dying to feel that mix of salt, oil and crunch, but I held off. Within a few minutes, our waitress arrived – yes!

"What kind of oil are the chips cooked in," I anxiously asked. The waitress stumbled a bit in her response. "Uhh, some kind of vegetable oil ... I think ..."

"But not lard, right?" I quickly interject. As she shook her head "no," I simultaneously lifted out a glistening chip, scooped it through the salsa and placed it onto my tongue, all in one fluid motion.

"Do you know what you'd like to drink?" she asks.

Boy, do I. But, first things first. "Are your margaritas vegetarian-friendly?" I ask with a sheepish smile. "You know, the tequila – is it OK for vegetarians?"

At this point, the confused waitress was probably wondering why SHE got stuck with the lunatic vegetarian customer. Melissa, who can no longer restrain her giggles, bursts out with: "The worm! Is there a worm in the tequila? She's afraid that if the tequila has a worm in it, she can't have a margarita."

"Uhh ... no, our tequila doesn't have worms," our waitress reassured us.

"Lime margarita. Frozen. No salt," I say, relieved.

Day 5

Although my actual hunger wasn't growing the deeper I got into this experiment, I was noticing, particularly on this day, that I was starting to crave something more substantial, something, well, meaty – even if it wasn't meat. I wracked my brain until, aha! Pasta should do the trick.

So I headed to Pasta & Provisions on Providence Road for some whole-wheat fettuccine and sun-dried tomato pesto. Toss in some cremini mushrooms and grated Parmesan cheese, then add a salad (yes, as in a vegetable salad) and I'm as stuffed as a ... tofurkey on Thanksgiving Day.

Day 6

I happen to mention to an old college friend that "I'm now a vegetarian." (I decided to hold off telling her that it is a temporary state of affairs.) "Whaaa-aatt?" was Joan's reply. Either my cell phone or hers occasionally acts up during our long-distance calls, so she apparently thought the connection had garbled my words.

"A vegetarian. That's right," I confirm.

"Bwaa-hahh-haah-hah!" is her less-than-complimentary retort. She quickly points out that I'm the woman who, during $1 taco night at our favorite college bar, built tacos consisting of: a shell, meat, cheese and, if feeling particularly adventurous, taco sauce.

All right. Clearly, I am NOT a vegetarian. And I know that avoiding meat and following a vegetarian diet for a mere week does not make me a vegetarian. People become vegetarians for religious or spiritual reasons, for moral beliefs, for health reasons – take your pick. One reason that Erek, the Earth Fare employee, became a vegetarian was so he could know "that nothing I consume was slaughtered senselessly." Improved health is another reason he chose the vegetarian lifestyle.

When he gets back to my house, I hungrily unwrap the Egg McWhatever. He tells me they charged him the same price for mine (minus the meat) as his classic Egg McMuffin. "What a ripoff," I mumbled, my mouth half-full of English muffin, melty cheese and egg.

But one thing I've learned from the dozens of vegetarians I've known is that avoiding meat is no guarantee of a healthy diet or lifestyle. Many of the vegetarians I know in Charlotte, in fact, eat extremely unhealthy diets, consisting largely of simple carbohydrates, highly processed foods, food laden with sugar and fat, and junk food.

As someone who's struggled with her weight her entire life, I know as well as anyone how difficult it is to find what works. About seven years ago, I found what works for me, and I lost 115 pounds. For me, it's lots of lean protein, complex carbs, good fats, three meals and two snacks daily – and avoiding the "white stuff" as much as humanly possible. It took 2½ years and exercising religiously to lose that weight. I've managed to keep off about 90 percent of it, which I know is something I "should be" proud of. But when you're still overweight, like I am, you can't help but continue to look for that "magic pill," and you can't help but beat yourself up when you spend an evening dining with Ben & Jerry.

Barbara Bapst, a licensed dietitian nutritionist in Charlotte, has worked with vegetarian clients in the past. Bapst, owner of Carolina Nutrition & Wellness, doesn't necessarily recommend vegetarianism as a means to getting healthy. But she is a big proponent of eating more fruits and veggies.

"A plant-based diet 'can be' very healthy," Bapst notes. But, if a vegetarian eats primarily "veggie burgers, well, that's not the best thing."

In fact, those soy nuggets I'd been noshing on from Earth Fare make my favorite fast-food nuggets (from Chick-fil-A) seem like a dieter's dream. According to the nutritional info provided by Earth Fare, 4 ounces of the Pacific Rim nuggets contain 493 calories, with a whopping 232 calories coming from fat (and 8 grams of the fat are saturated). Yikes!! Chick-fil-A's eight-piece nuggets (also 4 ounces) weigh in at a comparatively modest 260 calories (but 120 calories are from fat, with 2.5 grams saturated). I'm not in any way suggesting it's healthy to dine on ANY fast-food chicken nuggets; my point is that what "seems" to be healthy or low in calories often isn't.

For anyone who wants or needs to get more veggies in her diet, Bapst gives this advice: "If you haven't tried something since you were a kid, and didn't like it, give it a try now in a different form." For example, maybe it was the texture (limp, overcooked boiled green beans, anyone?) you really didn't like, Bapst says, rather than the actual taste. Instead, try steaming fresh green beans that retain a bit of crispness.

Day 7

"Oh, shoot!" I frantically dialed Ed on his cell phone. "Hold the Canadian bacon!" I spurt.

"What?" Ed says, more than a little puzzled.

"Are you at McDonald's yet? I can't have Canadian bacon on my Egg McMuffin. I still have one more DAY of you know what," I say, a little too exasperatedly.

So I tell Ed I'd still like the egg and the cheese. He thinks it's a lot cheaper if I get a biscuit with egg and cheese. Ummm, yeah, cheaper, but a hell of a lot more calories, I say.

When he gets back to my house, I hungrily unwrap the Egg McWhatever. He tells me they charged him the same price for mine (minus the meat) as his classic Egg McMuffin. "What a ripoff," I mumbled, my mouth half-full of English muffin, melty cheese and egg.

As my week of self-induced meat deprivation ended, I realized that I wasn't cut out to be a vegetarian. But, maybe you are. And if you're not, so what? Everyone needs to find her own path, whether it's littered with apple seeds and eggplant skins or chicken bones and fast-food wrappers. U

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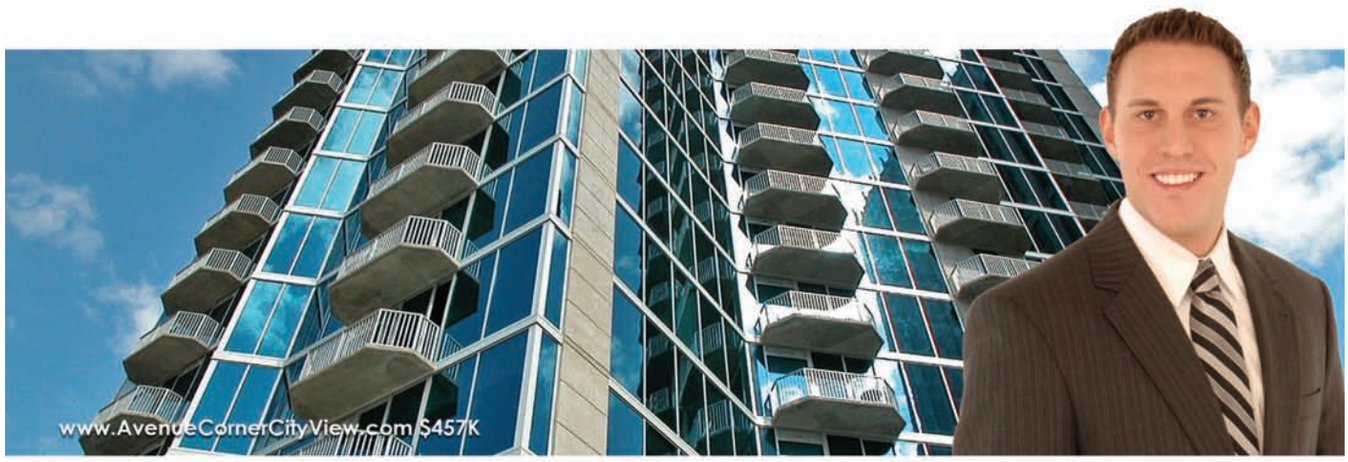

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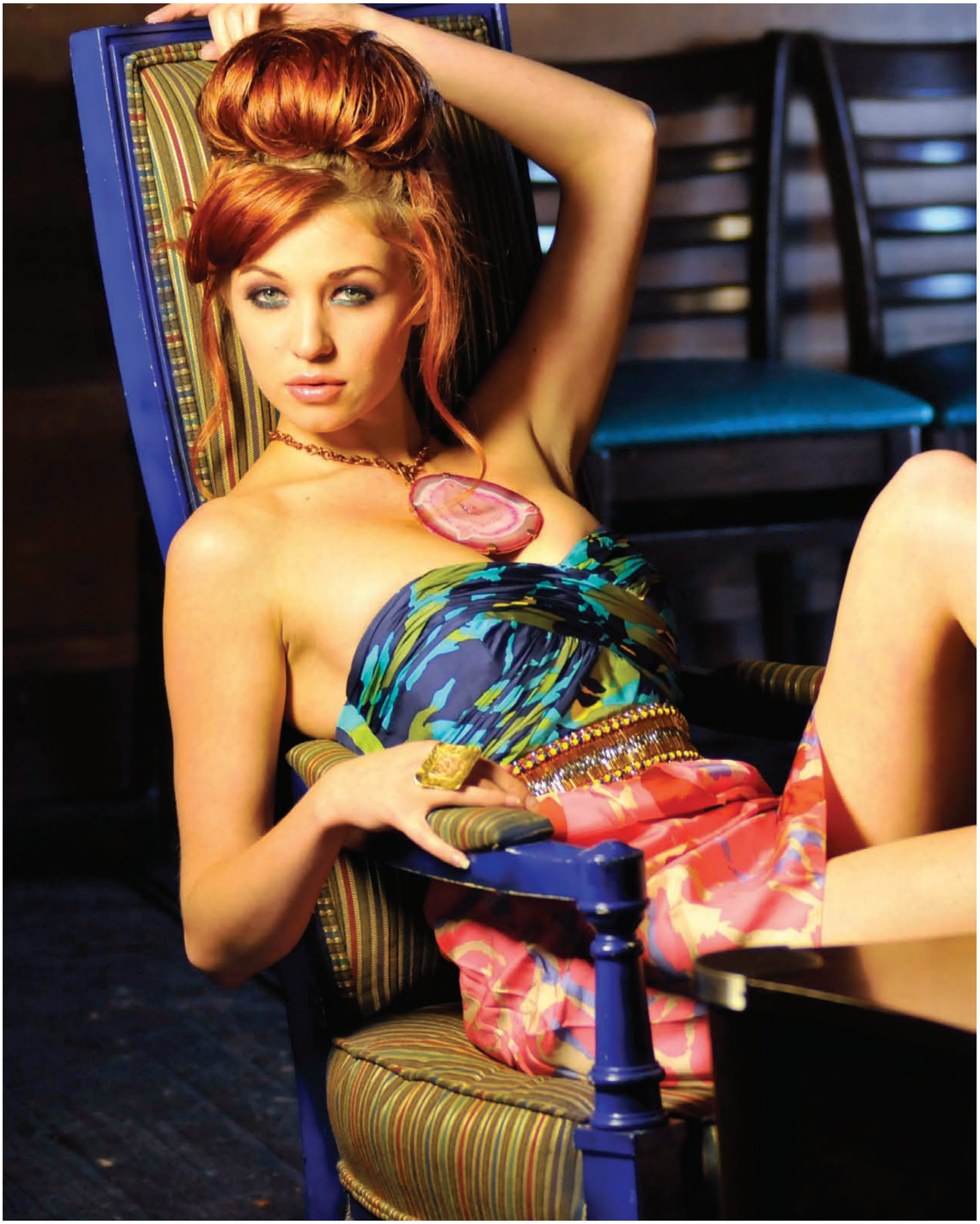

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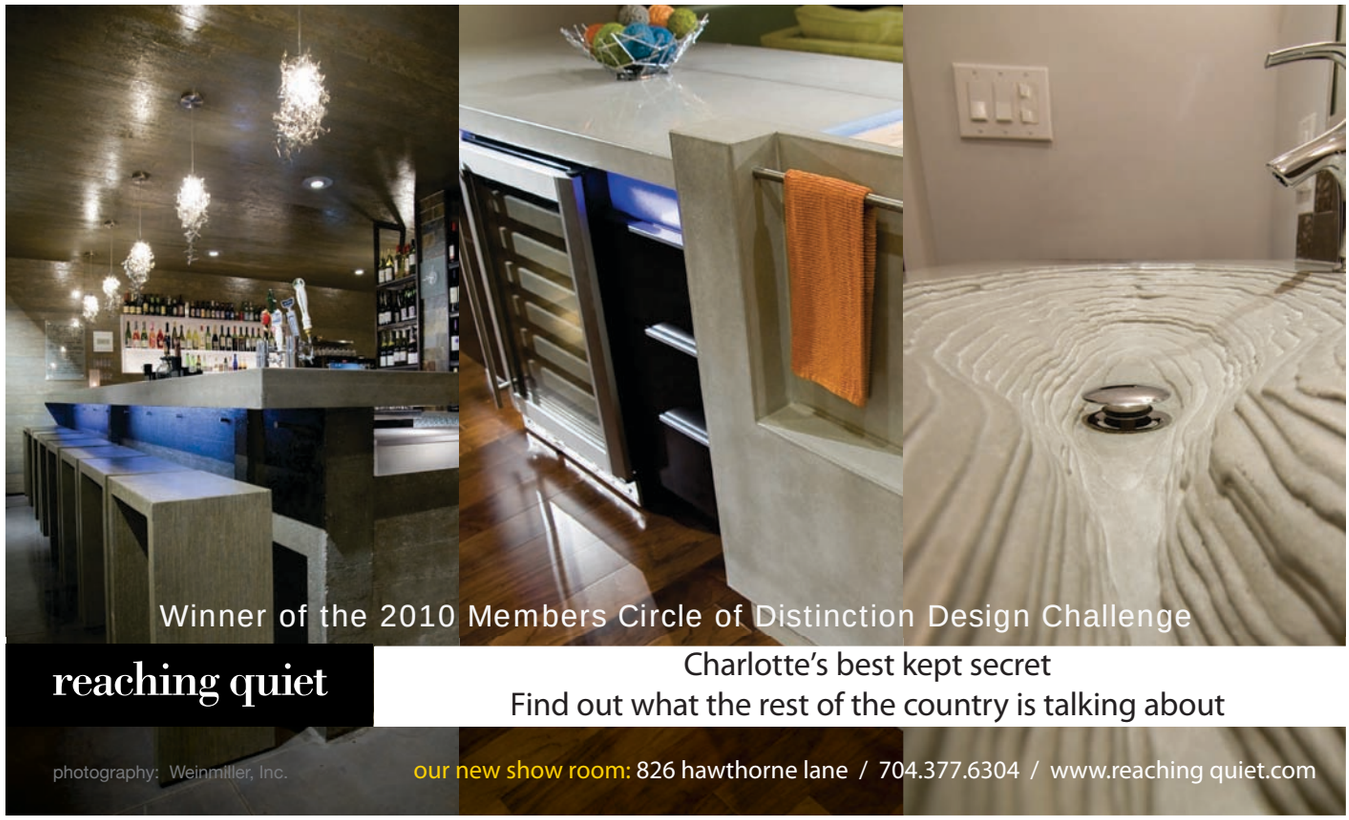

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Providence Café – $ $
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2801 Selwyn Ave. 704.333.3443
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The Gin Mill South End – $
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$ - 201 S. Tryon St. 704.332.4015
Einstein Brothers – $
1501 South Blvd. 704.333.4370
Java Passage – $
101 W. Worthington 704.277.6558
Jump N Joe's Java Joint – $
105 E. Morehead St. 704.372.3217
La Tea Da's – $
1942 E. 7th St. 704.372.9599
Nova's Bakery – $
1511 Central Ave. 704.333.5566
PJ's Coffee & Lounge - $
210 E. Trade St. (*Epicentre)* 704.688.0366
Port City Java – $
214 N. Tryon St. *(Hearst)* 704.335.3335
SK Netcafe – $
1425 Elizabeth Ave. 704.334.1523
Starbucks – $
545 Providence Rd. 704.372.1591
Starbucks – $
101 S. Tryon St. 704.374.9519
Tic Toc Coffee shop – $
512 N. Tryon St. 704.375.5750

DELI

Adams 7th Street Market – $
401 Hawthorne Ln. 704.334.0001
Art's Barbecue – $
900 E. Morehead St. 704.334.9424
Blynk – $
200 S. Tryon 704.522.3750
Common Market – $
2007 Commonwealth Ave. 704.334-6209
Dikadee's Deli – $
1419 East Blvd. 704.333.3354
Dogwood Cafe – $
138 Brevard Court 704.376.8353
Fresco Cafe & Deli – $
3642 Moultrie St. 704.376.5777
Grand Central Deli – $
101 N. Tryon St. 704.348.7032
Great Harvest Bread Co. – $
901 S. Kings Dr. 704.333.0431
Groucho's Deli – $
201 N. Tryon St. 704.342.0030
Halfpenny's – $
30 Two First Union Ctr. 704.342.9697
Jason's Deli – $
210 E. Trade (Epicentre) 704.688.1004
Jersey Mike's Subs – $
128 S. Tryon St. 704.343.0006
Jersey Mikes Subs – $
2001 E. 7th St. 704.375.1985
Jump N Joe's Java Joint – $
105 E. Morehead St. 704.372.3217
Laurel Market South – $
1515 South Blvd. 704.334.2185
Leo's Delicatessen – $
1421 Elizabeth Ave. 704.375.2400
Li'l Dino – $
401 S. Tryon St. 704.342.0560
Matt's Chicago Dog – $
425 S. Tryon St. 704.333.3650
Owen's Bagel & Deli – $
2041 South Blvd. 704.333.5385
Philadelphia Deli – $
1025 S. Kings Dr. 704.333.4489
Phil's Tavern – $
105 E. Fifth St. 704.347.0035
Rainbow Café – $
400 South Tryon 704.332.8918
Reid's – $
225 E. 7th St. 704.377.1312
Ri-Ra Irish Pub – $
208 N. Tryon St 704.333.5554
Salvador Deli – $
N. Davidson St. 704.334.2344
Sammy's Deli – $
1113 Pecan Ave. 704.376.1956

Dining and Nightlife Guide

Sandwich Club – $
525 N. Tryon St. 704.334.0133
Sandwich Club – $
435 S. Tryon St. 704.344.1975
Substation II - $
1601 South Blvd 704-332-3100
1941 E. 7th St. 704-358-8100

DESSERT

Crave the Dessert Bar – $
501 W. 5th St. 704.277.9993
Dairy Queen – $
1431 Central Ave. 704.377.4294
Dolce Ristorante – $$
1710 Kenilworth Ave. 704.332.7525
Luce Ristorante – $$
214 N. Tryon St. – Hearst Plaza 704.344.9222
Monticello – $$
235 N. Tryon St.– Dunhill Hotel 704.342.1193

ECLECTIC

The Melting Pot – $$$
901 S. Kings Dr. Stuite 140-B 704.334.4400
Therapy Cafe – $
401 N. Tryon St. 704.333.1353
The Fig Tree – $$
1601 E. 7th St. 704.332.3322

FRENCH

Terra – $$
545-B Providence Rd. 704.332.1886

GREEK

Greek Isles – $$
200 E. Bland St. 704.444.9000
Little Village Grill – $
710-G W. Trade St. 704.347.2184
Showmars – $
214 N. Tryon St. 704.333.5833

INDIAN

Copper – $$
311 East Blvd. 704.333.0063
Maharani – $
901 S. Kings Dr. 704.370.2824

ITALIAN

Carrabba's Italian Grill – $$
1520 South Blvd. 704.377.2458
Coco Osteria – $$
214 N. Tryon St.–Hearst Plaza 704.344.8878
Dolce Ristorante – $$
1710 Kenilworth Ave. 704.332.7525
Fig Tree – $$$
1601 E. 7th St. 704.332.3322
Hawthorne's NY Pizza – $
1701 E. 7th St. 704.358.9339
Intermezzo Pizzeria & Café – $
1427 E. 10th St. 704.347.2626
Luce Ristorante & Bar – $$$
214 N. Tryon St. – Hearst Plaza 704.344.9222
Mama Ricotta's – $$
601 S. Kings Dr. 704.343.0148
Open Kitchen – $
1318 W. Morehead St. 704.375.7449
Pasta & Provisions – $
1528 Providence Rd. 704.364.2622
Portofino's Italian – $$
3124 Eastway Dr. 704.568.7933
Primo Ristorante – $$
116 Middleton Dr. 704.334.3346
Cafe Siena – $$
230 N. College St. 704.602.2750
Salute Ristorante – $$
613 Providence Rd 704.342.9767
Terra – $$
545-B Providence Rd. 704.332.1886
Villa Francesca
321 Caldwell St. 704.333.7447
Volare – $$
1523 Elizabeth Ave. 704.370.0208
Zio Authentic Italian – $$
116 Middleton Dr. 704.344.0100

LATIN

Cuban Pete's – $
1308 The Plaza 704.910.5233

MEAT & THREE

Dish – $
1220 Thomas Ave. 704.344.0343
Mert's Heart & Soul – $
214 N. College St. 704.342.4222
Blue – $$$
214 N. Tryon St. 704.927.2583
Intermezzo Pizzeria & Café – $
1427 E. 10th Street 704.347.2626

MEXICAN

Cabo Fish Taco – $
3201 N. Davidson St. 704.332.8868
Johnny Burrito – $
301 S. Tryon St. 704.371.4448
La Paz – $$
1910 South Blvd. 704.372.4168
Phat Burrito – $
1537 Camden Rd. 704.332.7428
Salsarita's – $
101 S. Tryon St. 704.342.0950

MIDDLE EASTERN

Kabob Grill – $
1235-B East Blvd. 704.371.8984
Metropolitan – $
138 Brevard Ct. 704.333.5175

OUTDOOR DINING

Big Ben's Pub – $$
801 Providence Rd. 704.334.6338
Cans Bar – $
500 W. 5th St. 704.940.0200
East Boulevard Grill – $
1601 East Blvd. 704.332.2414
Ember Grille – $$$
601 S. College St. - Westin Hotel 704.335.2064
Ri-Ra Irish Pub – $
208 N. Tryon St 704.333.5554
Sullivan's – $$$
1928 South Blvd. 704.335.8228
The Corner Pub – $
335 N. Graham St. 704.376.2720

PIZZA

Brixx – $
225 East 6th St. 704.347.2749
Donato's Pizza - $
718-A West Trade St 704.714.4743
Domino's Pizza – $
343 S. Kings Dr. 704.331.9847
Fuel Pizza – $
214 N. Tryon St. 704.350.1680
Fuel Pizza – $
1501 Central Ave. 704.376.3835
Hawthorne's NY
1701 E. 7th St. 704.358.9339
Latta Pizza – $
320 S. Tryon St. 704.333.4015
Papa John's Pizza – $
1620 E. 4th St. 704.375.7272
Picasso's – $
214 N. Church St. 704.331.0133
Pie Town – $$
710 W. Trade St. 704.379.7555
Pizza Hut – $
901 S. Kings Dr. 704.377.7006
Rudino's Pizza & Grinders – $
2000 South Blvd. - Atherton Mill 704.333.3124
UNO Chicago Grill – $
401 S. Tryon St. 704.373.0085
Villa Francesca
321 Caldwell St. 704.333.7447
Zio Authentic Italian – $
116 Middleton Dr. 704.344.0100

QUICK BITES

Bojangles' – $
310 E Trade St. 704.335.1804
Boston Market – $
829 Providence Rd. 704.344.0016
Burger King – $
310 E. Trade St. 704.334.3312
Chick-fil-A – $
101 S. Tryon St. 704.344.0222
Chicks Restaurant – $
320 S. Tryon St. – Latta Arcade 704.358.8212
Church's – $
1735 W. Trade St. 704.332.2438
Dairy Queen – $
1431 Central Ave. 704.377.4294
Domino's Pizza – $
343 S. Kings Dr. 704.331.9847
Fuel Pizza – $
214 N. Tryon St. 704.350.1680
Fuel Pizza – $
1501 Central Ave. 704.376.3835
Green's Lunch – $
309 W. 4th St. 704.332.1786
Mr. K's – $
2107 South Blvd. 704.375.4318
Papa John's Pizza – $
1620 E. 4th St 704.375.7272
Pasta & Provisions – $
1528 Providence Rd. 704.364.2622
Pita Pit – $
214 N. Tryon St. 704.333.5856
Quiznos Sub – $
127 N. Tryon St. 704.374.9921
Quizno's – $
320 S. Tryon St. – Latta Arcade 704.372.8922
Roly Poly Sandwiches – $
317 S. Church St. 704.332.6375
Sbarro – $
101 S. Tryon St. 704.332.5005
Simply Subs – $
212 S. Tryon St. 704.333.0503
Smoothie King – $
Epicentre - 210 Trade St. 704.979.6911
Smoothie King – $
One Wachovia Center 704.374.0200
Spoons – $
415 Hawthorne Ln. 704.376.0874
Woody's Chicago Style – $
320 S. Tryon St. - Latta Arcade 704.334.0010
Zack's Hamburgers – $
4009 South Blvd. 704.525.1720

SEAFOOD

Aquavina – $$$
435 S. Tryon St. 704.377.9911
Cabo Fish Taco – $
3201 N. Davidson St. 704.332.8868
Capital Grille – $$$
201 N. Tryon St. 704.348.1400
Fig Tree –$$$
1601 E. Seventh St. 704.332.3322
LaVecchia's – $$$
225 E. 6th St. 704.370.6776
McCormick & Schmick's – $$$
200 South Tryon St. 704.377.0201
Outback Steakhouse – $$
1412 East Blvd. 704.333.0505

SOUTHERN & SOUL

Lupie's Cafe – $
2718 Monroe Rd. 704.374.1232
Mert's Heart and Soul – $
214 N. College St 704.342.4222
Price's Chicken Coop – $
1614 Camden Rd. 704.333.9866
Savannah Red – $$
100 W. Trade St. 704.333.9000
Marriott City Center

SPANISH

Sole Spanish Grille – $$$
1608 East blvd.. 704.343.9890

STEAKHOUSE

Beef & Bottle – $$$
~~4538 South Blvd. 704.523.9977~~
Capital Grille – $$$
201 N. Tryon St. 704.348.1400
Chima – $$$
139 S. Tryon St. 980.225.5000
Flemings - $$$
210 E. Trade St. 704.333.4266
LaVecchia's – $$$
225 E. 6th St. 704.370.6776
Longhorn Steakhouse – $$
700 E. Morehead St. 704.332.2300

Dining and Nightlife Guide

Morton's – $$$
227 W.Trade St.- Carillon bldg. 704.333.2602
Outback Steakhouse – $$
1412 East Blvd. 704.333.2602
Ruth's Chris – $$$
222 S. Tryon St. 704.338.9444
Sullivan's – $$$
1928 South Blvd. 704.335.8228

S U S H I

Enso – $$
210 E. Trade St. 704.716.3676
Fujo Uptown Bistro – $$
301 S. College St 704.954.0087
KO Sushi – $$
230 S. Tryon St. 704.372.7757
Nikko – $$
1300-F South Blvd. 704.370.0100
Pisces – $$
1100 E. Metropolitan Ave. 704.334.0009
Room 112 – $$
112 S. Tryon St. 704.335.7112
Ru-San's Sushi – $$
2440 Park Rd. 704.374.0008

T A P A S

Arpa Tapas – $$$ 704.372.7792
121 W. Trade St.
Cosmos Cafe – $$ 704.372.3553
300 N. College St.

V E G E T A R I A N

Blynk – $
200 S. Tryon 704.522.3750
Dish – $
1220 Thomas Ave. 704.344.0343
Something Classic Café – $
715 Providence Rd. 704.347.3666

V I E T N A M E S E

Pho An Hoa – $
4832 Central Ave. 704.537.2595

B A R S

Amos SouthEnd – $
1423 S. Tryon St. 704.377.6874
Apostrophe Lounge – $$
1400 S. Tryon St. 704.371.7079
BAR Charlotte – $
300 N. College St. 704.342.2557
Big Ben's Pub – $$
801 Providence Rd. 704.334.6338
Buckhead Saloon – $
201 E. 5th St. 704.370.0687
Cans Bar – $
500 W. 5th St. 704.940.0200
Cedar Street Tavern – $
120 N. Cedar St. 704.333.3448
Connolly's on 5th – $
115 E. 5th St. 704.358.9070
Cosmos – $$
300 N. College St. 704.375.8765
Coyote Ugly – $
521 N. College St. 704.347.6869
Crave the Dessert Bar – $
501 W. 5th St. 704.277.9993
Dilworth Bar & Grille
911 E. Morehead St. 704.377.3808
Dilworth Billiards
300 E. Tremont Ave. 704.333.3021
Dixie's Tavern
301 E. 7th St. 704.374.1700
DoubleDoor Inn
218 E. Independence Blvd. 704.376.1446
Ed's Tavern
2200 Park Rd. 704.335.0033
Evening Muse
3227 N. Davidson St. 704.376.3737
Fox and Hound – $
330 N. Tryon St. 704.333.4113
Hartigans Pub – $
601 S. Ceder St. 704.347.1841
Hawthorne's NY Pizza – $
1701 E. 7th St. 704.358.9339
Howl at the Moon – $
210 E. Trade St. 704.936.4695
Jillian's SouthEnd – $
300 E. Bland Street 704.376.4386
Loft 1523 – $$
1523 Elizabeth Ave. 704.333.5898
Madison's – $$
115 Fifth St. 704.299.0580
Morehead Tavern – $
300 East Morehead St. 704.334.2655
Mortimers -$
210 E. Trade St. 704.334.2655
Phil's Tavern – $
105 E. Fifth St. 704.347.0035
Picasso's – $
214 N. Church St. 704.331.0133
Pravda – $$
300 N. College St. 704.375.8765
Presto Bar and Grill – $
445 W. Trade St. 704.334.7088
Ri-Ra Irish Pub – $
208 N. Tryon St 704.333.5554
Selwyn Pub – $
2801 Selwyn Ave. 704.333.3443
Stool Pigeons – $
214 N. Church St. 704.358.3788
Suite – $
210 E. Trade St. 704.999.7934
The Attic – $
200 N. Tryon St. 704.358.4244
The Corner Pub – $
335 N. Graham St. 704.376.2720
The Forum – $$
300 N. College St. 704.375.8765
The Gin Mill – $
1411 S. Tryon St. 704.373.0782
The Penguin – $
1921 Commonwealth Ave. 704.375.6959
The Pub – $
710 West Trade St. 704.333.9818
Thomas Street Tavern – $
1218 Thomas St. 704.376.1622
Tilt – $$
127 W. Trade St. 704.347.4870
Town Tavern – $
200 N. Tryon
Tremont Music Hall – $
400 W Tremont Ave. 704.343.9494
Tutto Mondo – $
1820 South Blvd. 704.332.8149
Tyber Creek Pub – $
1933 South Blvd. 704.343.2727
Vinnie's Sardine – $
1714 South Blvd. 704.332.0006
Whiskey River – $
210 E. Trade St. 704.749.1097
Wild Wings - $
210 E. Trade St. 704.716.9464

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